

AIMING FOR THE SKY WITH AEROSPACE QUALITY
REGISTRATION

ABOUT KADON PRECISION MACHINING. Kadon Precision Machining is a precision metalworking and machining service specializing in high-precision turning and milling of exotic stainless steels, as well as mild steels, brass, copper, aluminum, and plastics. Located in Rockford, Illinois, the small, family-owned and operated manufacturer has approximately 23 employees.

THE CHALLENGE. Kadon Precision Machining's top priorities were: 1) accessing a new market space, 2) increasing customer leads, and 3) generating new business. As an ISO 9001 registered organization for over 15 years, this small manufacturer understood the importance of a quality management system and its impact on both their current and potential customer base. But when the Kadon team decided it was time to expand their market share through an AS9100 registration, the road to certification became a little cloudy. "What we could not move past was the limited internal resources we had to move us through the process of a new registration," said Justin Franklin, Vice President. That's when Franklin contacted the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC), part of the MEP National Network™, to help create a clearer vision of the future.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. IMEC recommended a review and assessment of the best route to move the company from ISO to AS9100. Establishing weekly meetings to identify, discuss, and move through all the necessary steps of the transition, the Kadon team bought in to the transition process and set forth on the long road to certification. Throughout the auditor process, Kadon found the help from IMEC to be essential. Extra preparation yielded an audit with only minimal findings, and within the next six weeks the company obtained a successful registration to AS9100. In addition to the official certification, the Kadon team has focused on internal improvement of their people, processes, and facility. They have implemented a new formal risk assessment procedure for pre-planning of all current and past work, and are realizing more predictability, more control, and more standard work for their processes. Through new visual management tools, the machine metrics are now more visible for all staff, eliminating the guess work and extra reports previously required. The tools are especially useful now that the company is adding jobs and increasing sales. "Overall the improvements in the business and adherence to the expectations have been dramatic," said Franklin. "Small steps have really been the driver of cultural change."

"I continue to be really impressed with the number of areas of expertise that IMEC brings to the table—being able to address and support everything from quality improvements to kaizen events, process mapping and more. These are all terms we hear in the industry, but small companies like us don't typically have the resources we need to see it through."

-Justin Franklin, Vice President

RESULTS



Successful registration to AS9100



Created 2 new jobs



Increased or retained sales by \$150,000



Improved standard work documentation

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